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WHAT PROGRAM MANAGERS AND PROJECT LEADERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PUBLICATIONS BUT USUALLY LEARN THE HARD WAY [1/]

by

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Abstract

Responsibilities of Program Managers and Project Leaders in Forest Service Research are listed and discussed. The focus is on publication of research results.

KEYWORDS: Communications, technology transfer, research.

INTRODUCTION

First, you should understand how I feel as an editor of research publications. For research I feel that there is no permanent value until the study findings have been documented in a publication. The objective of publishing research results is to disseminate the findings to the users. This is another way of saying "technology transfer." The procedures reported in this Note reflect the publication policy of the Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station (PNW). Other Stations may have more or less minor differences.

[1/] Presented to Project Management Training Task Groups, Phoenix, Arizona, March 26-30, 1979. An in-Service meeting conducted by U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

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Perhaps we should establish what a publication is because often there are misunderstandings. In general terms, a publication is printed or duplicated material that is distributed to meet specific needs of the general public, other agencies, and cooperators, as well as the needs of the USDA Forest Service. Exhibit 1 is the definition according to the Forest Service Manual[2/] (paragraph 1630.51). Visuals, mentioned last, will be addressed in more detail later.

Exhibit 1

Publications. For purposes of control and management in the Forest Service, the term, publications, generally refers to printed or duplicated informational material that is distributed to meet specific needs of the general public, other agencies and departments, and cooperators, as well as the needs of the Service. The term does not apply to the Forest Service directive system (FSM 1105).

1. Materials considered publications are:

a. Reports, booklets, bibliographies, leaflets, folders, pamphlets, and brochures issued in established series or as miscellaneous items by Regions, Stations, Areas, the Washington Office, or the Department.

b. Folders that include maps or charts and text other than legends (commonly called Forest visitor maps and wilderness maps).

c. Newsletters, instructor's aids, field guides, and training texts.

d. Articles in Service or Department periodicals, such as "Fire Management Notes" and "Tree Planters Notes."

e. Official articles, abstracts, chapters, or sections (FSM 1633) for publication in non-Government periodicals, books, encyclopedias, and proceedings.

f. Articles, leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, and books usually prepared cooperatively with State agencies, foundations, industrial associations, conservation organizations, or academic institutions.

g. Annual reports required by statute.

2. Materials not considered publications are:

a. News media releases and background materials for media use (FSM 1650).

b. Speeches, except those to be issued after the event in a published proceedings, and book reviews.

[2/] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1978. Forest Service Manual, Amend. 53.

c. Directives, regulatory and administrative announcements, financial advice, hearing and appeal notices, specifications and bid notices, and administrative reports issued to meet Forest Service statutory responsibilities.

d. Forms, schedules, agendas, and routing slips.

e. Preliminary drafts of publications reproduced in limited quantity for review. These should be clearly marked "Review Draft - Not for Publication."

f. Posters, signs, tags, and posted notices to the public.

g. Maps and charts without accompanying text.

h. Visual and lecture notes for filmstrips and slides (FSM 1640).

GENERAL PROCEDURES

The first step in preparing for sound, efficient research should be a study plan. After a study plan has been approved by line management, the research is conducted from which data are assembled, analyzed, and conclusions drawn for publication. At that point, the author may feel ready to start writing the report.

At the PNW Station, the author writes his own report. He should begin with a carefully organized outline, then write and rewrite until the product is the very best that the researcher is able to produce.

At that time the Program Manager or Project Leader and the author should decide what technical review process will be followed. The technical reviewers for some Stations have to include outside scientists in the same field as well as others at the home Station. Most of the Stations require biometric reviews of statistical analysis, and some scientific journals require it.

The Department of Agriculture requires that any mention of pesticides must be reviewed by the Pesticide Monitor of a Station who decides whether the mention or the recommendation of pesticides conforms with policy and law. Exhibit 2 is an official definition of pesticides.[3/]

Exhibit 2

Pesticides are synonymous with "Economic Poisons" as defined in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act and include those materials plus nematicides, herbicides, plant regulators, plant defoliants, plant desiccants, and bird, animal, and reptile repellents or poisons. Wood preservatives are also included, but not fire retardants.

Another part of the review process is the arithmetical and mathematical check. It is not done by a biometrician. If complex, the check requires a

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[3/] Correspondence from E. Bacon, USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C., dated March 9, 1970.

mathematician; if not complex, this might be done by somebody in the author's own unit who can check the additions, subtractions, and totals as they might appear in tables or in the text itself.

Another important check or review is of literature citations. Readers may need to check on the source of certain statements made in the report, so citations must be accurate, down to the spelling of the author names, titles just as published, and properly documenting the outlet in which they appear.

After full review and resulting revisions, the manuscript should be ready for approvals by Project Leader and Assistant Director (Program Manager and Deputy Director) and forwarding to the Editor. Figures should not be prepared in final form before editing because often preliminary figures may have incorrect legends or misspelled labels.

After editing and approval by the author and the Program Manager or Project Leader, further approvals are usually required by the Assistant Director or (Deputy Director), and the Director, the order according to the practices of each Station. The edited manuscript is then returned to the Editor who prepares it for printing. At the PNW Station, final preparation, including artwork, is usually handled by the Editor's shop then approved by the author. Afterwards the manuscript goes to the printer.

The printing is negotiated by the Publications Control Officer. At the PNW Station this responsibility is delegated from the Director to the Editor who also decides whether the outlet is appropriate, whether it would be more appropriate in a journal or in the Station series (usually decided when editing). When the report is printed, the Distribution Control Officer enters into the process.

Now that these have been mentioned in general, I'll deal with them from a different perspective.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM MANAGER OR PROJECT LEADER FOR PUBLICATIONS

The Program Manager or Project Leader is the first line officer required to approve an author's manuscript. Responsibility includes supervision--overseeing the quality of research which leads to the publication, and approving the technical soundness of the research, which means there must be adequate technical and statistical review. They are also responsible for the organization, quality, and completeness of the paper. In addition, they are responsible for reviewing revisions of the manuscript, and must also look at and review the comments made by the technical reviewers to decide whether the author has properly dealt with the valid comments of the reviewers. In some cases, they may have to arbitrate between the author and the technical reviewers. When satisfied, the Program Manager or Project Leader forwards the manuscript to the next level of approval which is the Assistant Director or Deputy Director. In some Stations the next step might be the Editor.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES

The Editor is responsible for following any valid priorities that may be given to a manuscript. The PNW Station's editors will process a manuscript chronologically as received if no priority designation has been given. For top priority, an Editor may need from a week to perhaps 60 days, depending on

length, before the manuscript would be ready for the printer. When real deadlines require priority, it's usually the Assistant Director or the Deputy Director who assigns the priority for the Editors' attention. If there is a conflict between the different programs and projects or different Assistant Director's on the Editors' time, then the Director might make the final decision for designating priority.

One might ask why there have to be priorities. These come about when a scientist gets a "short notice" invitation to present a paper at a meeting or to submit a report to a journal. It might be that the subject of the report is very timely and needs to be published as soon as possible, or that the publication be ready in time for a panel evaluation of a scientist or for other reports. All of these needs for priority are aggravated by procrastination. It is unfair to expect the Editor's shop to meet deadlines which are not theirs.

FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

The Program Manager or Project Leader should be aware of some financial constraints, although not having to make the final decision. The author should use only figures and photos that are actually needed in the report. The author should avoid verbosity and repetition. Some journals will reject articles that are too long or charge for excess pages over what they consider is their normal accepted manuscript. When printing must be rushed to meet a deadline, it is going to cost more. Printers are not used to printing any faster than they want to; and when they have to hurry, they charge more.

Authors and their supervisors should ask for color illustrations only if essential. Use of color is usually approved only to illustrate fire, disease, identification, or on maps. Such approval is requested by the Station Editor and is granted by the Washington Office.[4/] Exhibit 3 gives more detail (see footnote 2, paragraph 1630.12).

Exhibit 3

Color Printing. Advance clearance is required for all printing in more than one color of ink, including black, from the Washington Office Publications Control Officer. This restriction does not apply to forest visitor maps, wilderness maps, and other maps where more than one color of ink is necessary to delineate areas. Publications control officers will use criteria in the most recent edition of the Joint Committee on Printing Printing and Binding Regulations to determine the necessity for color printing of publication components (photographs, drawings, tint blocks, etc.) that appear with maps.

PERSONAL WRITING

Another consideration in preparing articles will involve whether the article is personal writing, defined here as those works not covered in the study plan, and whether it is writing on official time and about official work.

[4/] Washington Office refers to administrative headquarters of USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

If the article is written on the author's own time about official work, he will need the Director's approval whether or not he's paid for the article. If there are royalties involved, these royalties are the author's property only if his agency has approved. He can assign copyrights to the publisher. Exhibit 4 is from the Employees Handbook[5/] and explains more fully.

Exhibit 4

(h) Articles prepared officially are the property of the Government, and authors thereof may not accept payment for such articles published in outside journals, magazines or newspapers.

(i) Employees may not accept honorariums for written articles, speaking engagements, or addresses on radio or television or other appearances performed as part of their official duties... .

(j) No employees, except special Government employees, shall accept compensation for services as consultants or advisors to any organization, public or private, in any manner which draws upon the experience, competence, or professional standing acquired or enhanced by or through their position in this Department unless they have received permission from their Agency Head... .

. . . . . .

If the writing is on the author's own time but not about official work, it still needs the Director's approval. The royalties and copyright are the property of the author.

If the personal writing is on official time, about official work, and not part of the regular research duties of the scientist, the Program Manager or Project Leader and the Deputy Director or Assistant Director must approve the time taken from the research in order to do this. The royalties, if any, must be paid in this case only to the United States Government. A most important consideration is that there can be no copyrights. The report is in the public domain, and the author cannot sign any copyright agreement with the publisher. Exhibit 5 is a section from the Forest Service Manual (see footnote 2 paragraph 1631.16) which explains this.

Exhibit 5

Copyright. Government publications are not copyrighted; thus anyone is free to reproduce them without permission. The fact that a private publication in which the article appears is itself copyrighted does not alter the situation.

When an author intends to quote a copyrighted publication or use illustrations from it without charge, written permission must be obtained from the copyright holder--usually the publisher. Credit lines ("Courtesy of...") must appear with illustrations that are published with permission.

5/ USDA Administrative Regulations 3, AR18 and 19, and Code of Federal Regulations 7 CFRO.735-13.

All manuscripts submitted to private copyrighted journals or magazines must be declared to be in the public domain with the following statement:

> This article was written and prepared by U.S. Government employees on official time, and it is therefore in the public domain.

The new Copyright Law,[6] which came into effect January 1978, is essentially just like its predecessor; however, unlike the former law, the 1978 law is being strictly enforced.

REPRINTS AND RERUNS

The Publications Control Officer is responsible for reprinting and rerunning. The expense of an official publication is paid from the General Assessment budget by Research Support Services.[7] This includes journal page charges, general handling expense, journal surcharges for color or for excessive length or number of figures, and Government Printing Office charges.

Another consideration in publications is what to do when the supply for reprints becomes exhausted. The expense of journal reruns for Station publications can be handled in different ways. Either the project pays for them or in some cases Research Support Services pays for them. Some Stations will not reprint journal articles after 2 years and will not reprint Station publications after 5 years. There are exceptions to these instances that can be granted by the Deputy Director or Assistant Director or perhaps only by the Director.

The author can usually obtain all the reprints he wants, the rest being available to the public as well as available for in-Service distribution. Expense of publication is usually for the life of a publication, and this will vary by Station policy. The National Technical Information Service photocopies publications that have been put into their system, and they charge a high fee for a photocopy. Libraries have copies available in bound volumes--especially the large libraries. Superintendent of Documents may sell a Station publication if the proper procedures have been followed.

PUBLICATION DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of publications is usually controlled by the Station Publication Control Officer. At the PNW Station, this position is delegated by the Director. The research programs and projects may have distribution plans which should be made known to the Publication Control Officer. In-Service distribution, which I will mention only briefly, includes distribution to other Research Stations, Regional Offices, and the Washington Office. Forestry libraries usually get copies as do National Forest Supervisors, the Station's own staff and its field units. The number needed for public requests must be estimated, and experience determines what this number should be.

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[6] U.S. Laws, Statutes etc. 1976. Copyright Law. An act for the general revision of Title 17 of the United States Code, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat. 2541, effective January 1, 1978.

[7] Research Support Services is an administrative unit in USDA, Forest Service Research.

VISUAL DISPLAYS, POSTER PRESENTATIONS, TALKS

Earlier I mentioned visuals or displays, poster presentations, and talks, as they are not called publications in the Forest Service Manual (see footnote 2). These may be reviewed and edited by some Stations just like a report to be published. Identifying audience is very important because, as the Forest Service Manual states, regional, national, and international audience presentations must have the Director's policy approval.

CONCLUSION

Titles of supervisors may change, the mechanical processes may change, but the dissemination of research results in publications of highest possible quality will remain the high-priority objective of Forest Service Research.

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